

CMER Meeting Notes
4/26/01 NRB room 172- Olympia

Introduction: There were 20 participants at the meeting. Minutes for the March 28 meeting were accepted as distributed. Five new short topics were added to the agenda.

Budget Update: Jeff Grizzel said the proposed federal budget of \$1.536 million had been revised to \$1.415 million to support F&W on-the-ground implementation staff. The proposal would be acted on by the Policy Group today. Using direct implementation funds for non-point source projects, Jeff has located \$41,000 funding for UPSAG's road maintenance and abandonment project available July 1 pending final approval by DOE.

Other potential claims on funds include revision of the Forest Practices Illustrated operator's guide, an updating for the Forest and Fish Agreement. This could be a Policy Group decision. Hazard zonation does not appear to be a competing candidate as it has a separate allocation. UPSAG will try to become a part of DNR's hazard zonation work. CMER would have received the federal funds if it had not been allocated to DNR. DNR is concerned that CMER involvement will slow it down. Logic would involve UPSAG in the design phase and once the mapping begins it becomes a DNR implementation project. Mary Raines noted that there are two distinct projects (1) slope stability screening to replace unstable slope maps, and (2) a longer-term refinement by geologists to upgrade the inadequacies in the maps.

1. CMER Project Update and approvals for next steps relating to USFWS-Bull Trout funds. CMER's 11 top priorities and project status will be presented to the Policy Group May 17. It was noted that the SAGs need to develop a consensus recommendation on the project and the need for reviews and CMER will consider the recommendation and make the decision. For each of the below projects, scope of work statements have already been distributed for SAG and CMER review.

1a) Type N/P Effectiveness Pilot. Dave Schuett-Hames reported the project was on a fast track to complete a Cooperative Agreement with USFWS. As a consequence of the Bull Trout SAG group meeting a revised scope of work was developed and approved for CMER consideration. On April 10 a draft scope of work was circulated and on April 20 the request for support was made to CMER. Kate Benkert will develop the Coop Agreement for signature by CMER in early May. The revised objectives put the emphasis on developing the study design for evaluating the effectiveness of the Type F and N riparian prescriptions, including peer review and all of the preliminary steps for conducting a multi-year experiment. The RSAG meeting reviewed it and they will steer the implementation as the project is in the process of being handed off from Bull Trout to RSAG. An oversight group is being developed for the study design. Not many CMER comments were received. LWAG wants to integrate amphibian response sampling in the design. There was considerable discussion on the compression of the timeline and whether the project was really a pilot project or a design development process for a multi-year experiment with a complex stratification in time and space. The sense was that a lot of preliminary design work needed to be completed before active field work including the measurements to be taken, the techniques used with a detectability analysis, and a set of treatments over time and space in an experimental design. These tasks could be developed from prior efforts and would not need new pilot testing.

The decision was made to move ahead with the Cooperative Agreement and Dave will coordinate a meeting to develop a consensus behind the revised scope and consider an early independent peer review of the design. The design activity falls under the Coop Agreement. USFWS were prepared for a minimum of \$100,000 that could be spent within 5 years. This did not include an amphibian part, suggesting the potential need for additional CMER support. Since this is a long-term commitment, multi-year projections of project costs and sharing arrangements need to be developed and periodically adjusted as needed.

1b) Bull Trout Overlay/Standard Rules Shade/Temperature Comparison. Terry Jackson summarized the progress. A USFWS Coop Agreement is being developed. There is not much change to prior protocols but efforts to obtain independent reviews were largely unsuccessful. A discussion of the aspects needing review developed the sense that the project could become a critical element of adaptive management needing a better design and statistical methods review. The design needs to be set before landowner participation can be arranged.

The decision was made to move ahead on the Cooperative Agreement, and move ahead with the RFQQ to fund the design and review, recognizing that the field efforts might not get started this year.

1c) Shade/Canopy Cover Effectiveness. Terry Jackson reported that the Bull Trout SAG had a hard time coming to agreement. Questions included why not just do effectiveness rather than solar energy measures? Can it be incorporated in the other studies i.e. can it still be integrated into the N/F project? N/F will have control sites and paired treatment sites. Terry will convene the group to develop a better consensus. Kate will arrange for it to be a part of one of the Coop Agreements.

1d) Nomograph Refinement. Kate Benkert reported that the proposal draft had been sent out to Bull Trout and CMER. The RFP will be on the web soon. RFQ's will be evaluated mid-May by a Bull Trout SAG technical review panel and work will start June 15. CMER supported the SAG recommendation that no review was needed as it was a well-established procedure and the focus was on gathering more data.

1e) Eastern Washington Last Fish/Habitat. Brian Fransen reported that the RFQQ is out. Responses will be in on May 1, the review team meets May 2 and the contract should be let May 15. There were no unanswered questions. No peer review was needed as the project is extending data collection and the analysis procedures were already set. The permits for sampling could be a problem. Kate suggested permits would not be a problem working under Coop Agreements where we have bull trout. Since the cost is not yet known, funding estimates were discussed. The scope now includes 10 watersheds, more than the original estimate of \$20-60,000 for the eastside data. The project could be pared down in geographic regions or elevations if needed. NMFS expressed concerns over the drought year impact but that can be tested for. The study does not fund measurements over time, but provides excellent sites for such. There was concern whether this study was sufficient to finalize the eastside model which when validated will be locked into for 5 years or if not validated additional data might need to be collected.

CMER supported the SAG recommendation that no reviews were needed.

Concerns over whether the public controversy on Electro-shocking had any bearing on our science studies were raised. While it still remains the accepted scientific method, it would be prudent to examine alternatives and be prepared to justify the method used.

1f) Groundwater Conceptual Model Development. Kate Benkert reported that no comments were received on the scope of work from the CMER group. A personal service contract to go a step beyond the temperature workshop in design and cost estimation is planned. No peer review was recommended until the design is provided under the contract. The RFP will be issued on Monday with the website listing up next week. Selection will go through a technical review panel and if not contracted before June 30, the money will be swapped into other projects. DNR can subcontract under their Coop Agreement without violating the funding date.

2. Other progress on the top 11 projects.

2a) Money needs to be factored into project budgets for now. If group recommendations for reviews of final reports were not budgeted and there are no available funds, bring a recommendation to CMER. USF&W budgeted for some of the bull trout reviews.

2b) Jim MacCracken reported the RMZ re-measurement study is on a fast track for the end of May. . Concern was expressed whether the prior study reviews by LWAG were published. Journal articles pose conflicting conclusions vs. the report findings. These new developments need to be considered in the study design. CMER suggests LWAG make a recommendation on how the study design will be impacted and what review or documentation of existing reviews is needed. Based on LWAGs recommendations, CMER will make a decision as to the need for further review.

2c) Brian Fransen questioned how to make certain parts 2 and 3 of the Fish typing study get funds in line for a July 1 start. Extensions to the current contract would be sufficient and not time consuming and the Policy Group will soon have approved the priorities.

2d) Each project needs to plan for future year needs. Will the project be done by June 30 2002, likely need an extension, or more money? Are we sure to use the time sensitive money? This should not be a problem in the aggregate as the federal funds are good for 2 years. With the anticipated increase in funds, the SAG co-chairs need to be prepared for the late June meeting (2 months) to recommend their next set of priorities including (1) any completion tasks for the current 11 prioritized projects, (2) previous projects that did not make the top 11, (3) new projects. These priorities should be circulated soon after the next meeting to allow cross SAG cooperation.

2e) At the May meeting now scheduled for June 5, all participants should come prepared to discuss what will make the next prioritization process better. Based on this discussion, CMER plans to clearly define how the prioritization process will be conducted before the prioritization meeting occurs.

3. CMER-Supported NWIFC Staffing. Dave discussed past, current and a proposed future staffing. Jeff asked for consideration for how larger budgets might affect staffing, as the Policy Group anticipates CMER funds of \$2.6 million, \$3.35 million and \$3.35 million over the next 3 years. The Fed new money support may drop after the 5th year with allowable expenses spread over 7 years. Effectiveness monitoring could add a substantial staff need. Providing a better home for CMER data could be a major task. Each SAG was asked to assess their future support needs by the next meeting. CMER voted support for not less than the current staffing levels with increases dependent upon SAG requests for increasing project loads. Contract extensions for the June 30 end date or amendments for increased support can be done quickly.

3.a Database support. The database support discussion suggested much more attention needs to be placed on maintaining the availability and accessibility of reports and their databases. Each SAG and the Effectiveness Monitoring Team should consider this in their support needs. Dave will write down some archival process steps that could become guidelines for database retention.

4. CMER Workplan Development. Jeff reported that the Policy Group has requested an updating of the CMER Workplan to be available before the end of the year. The prior plan included CMER structure, roles, responsibilities, procedures and longer-term plans. The sentiment was that someone could update the framework part and that the current priorities provide most of the plan. Each new set of priorities will extend the plan. UPSAG has a matrix of topics and future cost estimates. Each SAG will have at least their project priority recommendation for the next several years for the June meeting. Jeff will pull together the framework asking for help from the prior workplan committee. The current workplan with examples of a longer term SAG plan or the extended priority plan of all SAGs can then be added.

5. Science Review Committee Update. Jeff reported that the RFQQ did not go out and has some last minute edits in preparation for a public listing next week. Responses are requested by June 1 and the contract should be in place by August 1. Suggestions for a selection committee included Tim, Jeff, Doug, and several Policy representatives like Wade Boyd and an agency representative.
6. CMER Co-chair terms. With the objective of staggered terms for continuity but no intimidating long-term requirement, the recommended term is not less than one year.
7. ERSAG/SAGE update. Pete Peterson reported that ERSAG discussed the need to avoid overlaps and potential conflicts with other SAGs. They identified criteria for their participation (shown below) and their preferred participation level for each of CMER's priority projects (see SAGE memo April 23, 2001 by Pete Peterson and Domoni Glass).
 - 1) Oversight and coordination of selected projects that address issues that are unique to the eastside.
 - 2) Coordination with other SAGs that are addressing eastside situations as part of their studies. This may include several levels of participation such as:
 - 2a) Active participation in study planning and design.
 - 2b) Review of study designs and documents, as they become available
 - 3) Projects we are not interested in, or plan on only minor tracking efforts.

CMER participants should review the SAGE strategy and be prepared to comment at the next meeting.

8. Rural Technology Initiative Habitat and Instream Functionality modeling. Bruce Lippke suggested holding a special presentation meeting to demonstrate how the Landscape Management System developed at UW can be used to simulate/project forest stand and landscape conditions with linkages to project various habitat suitability indices and instream functions. The emphasis is on the impacts from management alternatives, especially for small owners who have an intense interest in their land stewardship. CMER will help advertise the event and provide an Olympia location. June 12 was suggested as a potential date.
9. LIDAR uses and Coalition. Mary Raines is participating in a coalition to get LIDAR measurements for Western Washington and will be attending a meeting to solicit funding. She suggested a special presentation meeting for the Coalition to describe what they are doing and how it provides measures of importance to the SAGs. The Precision Forestry Coop at UW has already completed LIDAR flights producing measures of stand structure, surface structure, stream initiation points, and is working on canopy density and other measures of interest.

It was suggested the two technology presentations, (1) LIDAR and (2) Habitat modeling be offered back to back for convenience and advertising. Mary and Bruce will work toward this goal.

10. Watershed Analysis Ad-hoc Workgroup. Mark Hunter provided minutes from a workgroup meeting with the objective of coming up with recommendations for the role of Watershed Analysis methodology as a response to Forest and Fish Report Appendix G requirements. There appeared not to be a consensus on the report's recommendations, the Department of Ecology was not a participant in the meeting and their review was still needed, and the CMER participants had not been able to digest the report in advance. Questions of what happens with watershed certification since it is mostly inactive and what happens if the 5-year review is not done were raised. Mark will work to get a more consensus report for distribution to CMER for action at the next CMER meeting.
11. How tribal communities could interface on cultural resources? Speaking for Jeffrey Thomas, Dawn Pucci and Mary Raines characterized tribal interests to work with CMER on technical issues

associated with cultural resources. The question asked was how would we be expected to help them? The consensus was that it should first be framed as a policy question for the Policy Group. Dawn will convey the suggestion to Jeffrey.

12. FFR Task List. As a continuation of the prior request, SAGs are to review the Forest and Fish task list, determine tasks which fall within their purview and determine if the task has been considered in the work plan. This information will be considered by CMER at the next meeting.

Next meeting schedule: June 5, 9AM to 3PM Olympia.